



# *NEWS RELEASE*

## **WYOMING DISTRICT OFFICE**

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### **MJ Clark Named Small Business Journalist of the Year 2006**

**Lander** – The Wyoming District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has named M.J. Clark, Research Director of the Wyoming Business Report, as the Wyoming Small Business Journalist of the Year 2006. The award will be presented to her on Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at the annual Casper Chamber Banquet which will start at 5:30pm at the Parkway Plaza Hotel and Convention Center, Grand Ballrooms in Casper. Steve Despain, District Director, will be presenting Ms Clark with this award.

This award is given to an individual making concerted efforts to increase public understanding of the importance of small business contributions to the economy; who makes contributions of news and feature stories, editorials, columns and commentary that highlight and analyze small business issues; this person performs volunteer community service aimed at enhancing small business opportunity and growth and other achievements that exemplify the nominee's media efforts to improve the understanding of the role of small business in the U.S. economy.

The President of the United States recognizes contributions of the small business community to the American economy and society by proclamation each year.

M.J. Clark was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii and grew up in a multi-ethnic, service based economy. After earning her BS degree as a four-year National Merit scholar at Washington University in St. Louis, she worked in medicine, philanthropy, the tourist industry, publishing, marketing and sales before turning to journalism full time.

Using her own experience as a starting point, MJ brings a unique perspective to her work. With every story she writes, she tries to include nuts and bolts information so that readers take away techniques they can apply to their own business.

Working for a small local newspaper, The Lander Journal, MJ necessarily covered a wide range of topics. While at the Journal, MJ earned two first place awards from the Wyoming Press Association for in-depth reporting and feature writing. The award winning Sho-Rap story was a feature on a unique business: contract firefighting. During her five-year tenure at the Journal, MJ did a regular feature titled "Who's the Boss" which showcased local business owners and their secrets to success. Business development on the Wind River Indian Reservation was one area MJ felt was underexposed, and she went out of her way to present stories from both tribes, as well as

regular updates on the Wind River Development Fund – an economic development organization based on the Reservation.

Upon joining the Wyoming Business Report, MJ was given a broader, business-focused audience, it also extended the geographic range of businesses she could profile to state-wide. MJ has done economic profiles of Sublette, Teton and Fremont Counties. She has reported on the retail outlook for the state, and on the economic impact of Business Ready Community grants on various locations.

This summer MJ was named Research Director for the Wyoming Business Report. In addition to writing stories, she is now responsible for managing the database which include basic information on every business in the state. The database is the single most accessible route to contacting and doing business with companies in Wyoming.

In addition to her work with the Wyoming Business Report, last November she began hosting “Wyoming Perspectives” on Wyoming Public Television. MJ is truly a deserving person to receive this prestigious award.

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*For more information about SBA’s programs for small businesses, call 307-261-6500 or TDY 307-261-6527 or visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at [www.sba.gov/wy](http://www.sba.gov/wy).*

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